We Make the Road by Walking

3 CHALLENGES FOR YOUR NEXT 25 YEARS!

for slides:

www.brianmclaren.net
1. Celebrate how far you’ve come! You have made the road by walking!

There is a road leading from the past to the present, but not from the present to the future.
HOW TO START A NEW DENOMINATION* FOR THE 21ST CENTURY (FOR DUMMIES)

*or denominetwork
Caminante, son tus huellas
el camino y nada más;
Caminante, no hay camino,
se hace camino al andar.
Al andar se hace el camino,
y al volver la vista atrás
se ve la senda que nunca
se ha de volver a pisar.
Caminante no hay camino
sino estelas en la mar.
Traveler, the road is your footsteps and nothing more;
Traveler, there is no road.
We make the road by walking.
To walk is to make the road,
and to look back is to see that we can never pass this way again.
Traveler, there is no road, only wake-trails in the sea.
1. Celebrate how far you’ve come! You have made the road by walking!

There is a road leading from the past to the present, but not from the present to the future.

All religions are in the making.

A religion will be what its adherents make of it.

To be a Christian leader is to take your share of responsibility for the form of Christianity that you model for future generations.
1. Celebrate how far you’ve come! You have made the road by walking!

“I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS” - JESUS

“CHRIST’S LOVE COMPELS US …” - PAUL
THIS DENOMINETWORK IS STILL IN THE MAKING.

IT WILL NEVER BE FINISHED.

IT IS ALWAYS BEING CREATED.

WHEN IT IS FINISHED, IT IS FINISHED.

So keep celebrating your progress!
2. Realize you didn’t start at the top of a slippery slope in 1991.
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Western Christianity slid far down long before that.
2. Realize you didn’t starting at the top of a slippery slope in 1991.
In 1492, Columbus sailed the ocean blue.
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In 1495, Columbus shipped 1600 slaves alive.
1495

2nd Voyage Return Cargo:
1600 male and female Taino
slaves for Spain

“It is possible, with the
name of the Holy Trinity, to
sell all the slaves which it
is possible to sell ... Here
there are so many of these
slaves ... although they are
living things they are as
good as gold.”
In 1492, Columbus sailed the ocean blue.

In 1495, Columbus shipped 1600 slaves alive.

In 1452, Pope Nicolas told the conquistadors what to do.
“...invade, search out, capture, vanquish, and subdue all Saracens and pagans whatsoever, and other enemies of Christ wheresoever placed, and the kingdoms, dukedoms, principalities, dominions, possessions, and all movable and immovable goods whatsoever held and possessed by them and to reduce their persons to perpetual slavery, and to apply and appropriate to himself and his successors the kingdoms, dukedoms, counties, principalities, dominions, possessions, and goods, and to convert them to his and their use and profit.” - Pope Nicolas V, Romanus Pontifex, Doctrine of Discovery - 1452
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THE DEADLY COMMISSION: White Christian Supremacy
The Spaniards who remained in Hispaniola were encouraged to take Taino slaves “in the amount desired.” Columbus himself gave a teenage girl to one of his crew, Miguel Cuneo, for his personal “use.” Cuneo wrote that she “resisted with all her strength” when he attempted to have sex with her, so he “thrashed her mercilessly and raped her.” Being given a Taino woman to rape was, in fact, a popular “company perk” for Columbus’s men. Columbus himself wrote to a friend, “There are plenty of dealers who go about looking for girls; those from nine to ten [years old] are now in demand.”
With my own eyes I saw Spaniards cut off the nose and ears of Indians, male and female, without provocation, merely because it pleased them to do it. ...Likewise, I saw how they summoned the caciques and the chief rulers to come, assuring them safety, and when they peacefully came, they were taken captive and burned.... They laid bets as to who, with one stroke of the sword, could split a man in two or could cut off his head or spill out his entrails with a single stroke of the pike.... They attacked the towns and spared neither the children nor the aged nor pregnant women nor women in childbed, not only stabbing them and dismembering them but cutting them to pieces as if dealing with sheep in the slaughter house.
They took infants from their mothers' breasts, snatching them by the legs and pitching them headfirst against the crags or snatched them by the arms and threw them into the rivers, roaring with laughter and saying as the babies fell into the water, "Boil there, you offspring of the devil! ... They made some low wide gallows on which the hanged victim's feet almost touched the ground, stringing up their victims in lots of thirteen, in memory of Our Redeemer and His twelve Apostles, then set burning wood at their feet and thus burned them alive.
THE DEADLY COMMISSION: White Christian Supremacy
2. Realize you aren’t starting at the top of a slippery slope.

Behind the fundamentalism you sought to escape in 1991 is a powerful super-system of white Christian supremacy that puts white people, especially rich white men, first.

You are well placed to be gracious, courageous leaders in an alternative vision and way of life. The next 25 years will be critical.
a special note to 50+ leaders …

Why amass a lifetime of social/spiritual capital if you’re not going to use it?

In the coming years … please use your credibility/voice/influence/privilege on behalf of those who lack them. Please.
a special note to youth & young adults

Some of you can start new faith communities. Please do ... fresh, different, creative, engaged! Not the kind your parents approve - but your peers need.

Some of you can find places of ministry in existing churches where you can take off your mask, be yourself, and serve from your heart.

Do not waste your one wild and precious life playing religious games at the bottom of the slippery slope!

Do not be chaplains to the counterpart of the enslavers of 1845.
2. Realize you aren’t starting at the top of a slippery slope.

You are making progress! You’re on a journey. You are making the road by walking … uphill, regaining lost ground.
1. Celebrate how far you’ve come! You have made the road by walking for 25 years!

2. Realize you didn’t start at the top of a slippery slope. You have a long adventure ahead!
3. Seize this moment by centering on the grand essentials.
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The good news of Jesus
The great commandment of Jesus
The great commission of Jesus
3. Seize this moment by centering on the grand essentials.

The good news of Jesus

Not the “sinner’s prayer” evacuation plan …
But a transformation plan.

Not … “Now I lay me down to sleep”
But “May your will be done on earth …”

Not a nostalgic, regressive movement into the past …
But joining God in the healing of the world in the present, for the future
3. Seize this moment by centering on the grand essentials.

The great commandment of Jesus

Revolutionary love!
Love can only begin from knowing God, as love comes from God. As we live out the mandate of loving others, self and creation, we must continue to know, in order to love better. This is a cycle, not a linear process. As we go through the outer circle, we are learning to love God. It is ONLY through loving people, self and creation that we are able to love God in a real way. As you continue to go through the love cycle, the breadth and depth of your capacity to love increases.
Whenever we build walls to separate ourselves from those in need, Jesus chooses the side of the wall where the need is.
3. Seize this moment by centering on the grand essentials.

The great commandment of Jesus

Love God
Love neighbor (including stranger, alien, outsider, outcast, enemy)
Love self
Love the earth (God cares for every sparrow)
3. Seize this moment by centering on the grand essentials.

The great commandment of Jesus
Your church as an Academy of Love

Confront the love of money - which is the root of all kinds of evil, and is deeply embedded in America’s DNA.

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The great commission of Jesus

Not making Baptists or Christians, but …
Forming lifelong disciples … people who follow a rabbi/teacher

Who imitate his example and teach others the art of living in his way

Who do what he did - not kill, but heal; not judge & shame, but welcome to the table; not conform, but transform with good news for the poor, oppressed, imprisoned.
3. Seize this moment by centering on the grand essentials.

The great commission of Jesus

IF YOU WANT TO WELCOME NEW MEMBERS - THEY WILL BE YOUNG … THEY WILL BE MULTI-RACIAL THEY WILL BE JUSTICE-ORIENTED THEY WILL WANT MEANING & COMMUNITY THEY WILL NOT SUBMIT TO YOUR CODES OF SILENCE …
3. Seize this moment by centering on the grand essentials.

The good news of Jesus
The great commandment of Jesus
The great commission of Jesus

WARNING! THIS IS REVOLUTIONARY!
WHAT WILL THE NEXT 25 YEARS HOLD FOR CBF?

1. CONSTANT CELEBRATION FOR CONTINUING PROGRESS … MAKING THE ROAD BY WALKING.

2. RECOGNITION THAT YOU’RE PART OF A BIGGER, BETTER STORY OF JUST AND GENEROUS CHRISTINA FAITH THAT STRETCHES BACK BEFORE 1991 … AND CONTINUES FAR INTO THE FUTURE.

3. DEEP CENTERING ON JESUS - HIS REVOLUTIONARY GOOD NEWS, GREAT COMMANDMENT, AND GREAT COMMISSION
1. 30 YEAR OLD LEADERS - DIVERSE IN EVERY WAY - WHO ARE 5 YEARS OLD TODAY … (CHRISTIANITY BEGAN AS A YOUTH MOVEMENT)

2. SENSE THAT YOU ARE NOT NOSTALGIC PRESERVERS OF PAST - BUT DYNAMIC CREATORS WHO JOIN GOD IN CREATING A JUST, JOYFUL, PEACEFUL, BEAUTIFUL FUTURE.

3. CELEBRATING JESUS - LIVING HIS REVOLUTIONARY GOOD NEWS, GREAT COMMANDMENT, AND GREAT COMMISSION
We Make the Road by Walking

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